Tried for His Life;

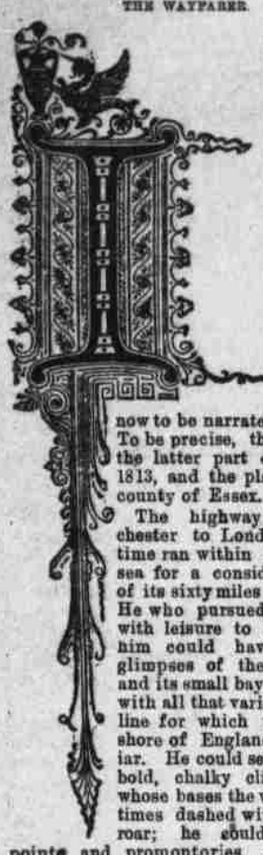
—OR—

WITHIN THE SHADOW OF THE SCAFFOLD.

By MAJOR JAMES FRANKLIN FITTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE WAYFARER.



T was long ago, in merry England—so long that steam was unknown as a means of transporting travelers upon the roads and rivers, and the stage-coach was the most expeditious conveyance by land—that the events now to be narrated occurred. To be precise, the time was the latter part of the year 1813, and the place was the county of Essex.

The highway from Colchester to London at that time ran within sight of the sea for a considerable part of its sixty miles of distance. He who pursued this route with leisure to look about him could have frequent glimpses of the North Sea and its small bays and inlets, with all that variety of coast line for which the eastern shore of England is peculiar. He could see in places bold, chalky cliffs, against whose bases the waves sometimes dashed with a sullen roar; he could see high points and promontories jutting out from the land; and there were also long strips of sandy beach, usually where the restless sea had made an indentation in the shore, and a bay was formed where ships' boats could land in good weather.

This was the interesting panorama that the traveler upon this road might see, but we may well doubt whether the man saw much of it who was striding along below Colchester near sunset of the third day of September, in the year named. He was a pedestrian, "afoot and alone," his face set toward London, and a bundle carried at the end of a stick over his shoulder. His clothes were seedy, and patched in places. His hat was pulled low over his eyes, as if he wished to escape observation and recognition. He never stopped to observe any feature of the road; to those whom he met, riding or walking, he merely gave one quick glance, and then looked down again. More than one who had met or passed him that day day had said to himself, "That's an ill-looking fellow." When the coach bound to London had passed him at an earlier hour he had looked up and scowled, very much as though he hated the people upon it who were able to ride, while he was compelled to walk.

Plodding along thus, his heart full of bitterness toward the world, heeding little that was near him, he was startled from his mood by a sharp, decided voice close behind him.

"Get to one side, my man; you frighten my horse."

A glance over his shoulder showed him that a horseman was almost upon him. The blooded animal was curvetting and shying, and his rider was trying to force him on.

The wayfarer jumped to the side of the road. A light touch of the spur sent the horse bounding on. In two minutes horse and rider had disappeared from sight around a curve in the road.

Just a glimpse of the horseman's face was given to the pedestrian as he dashed by him. A glimpse—it was enough!

He saw a young man of perhaps twenty-five years of age, with a handsome, manly face, and an easy seat in the saddle that showed the practiced horseman. He was dressed in the fatigue uniform of the British artillery service, which showed him to be an officer of some rank.

The wayfarer dropped his bundle and stared at the fast disappearing rider. The latter had taken no further notice of him—had certainly not recognized him.

But he had himself been recognized. The livid face of the pedestrian, marked with the traces of dissipation and excess, grew paler still with hate; he shook his fist at the rider, and a horrid execration broke from his lips.

"Curses on you!" he cried. "May you break your neck before you get a mile further on!"

He threw himself moodily down by the roadside. The sun was now down; he knew that the twilight was quickly ended at this season of the year. A milestone near by told him that there were still thirty miles of weary road between him and London.

He could not keep his savage thoughts off the man who had just passed him. The burden of them was such as has harassed thousands of miserable men before and since—the wretched weight of envy; but never more bitterly did man think or speak than he.

"I walk, he rides. I am poor, he lacks for nothing. I am a miserable adventurer, almost an outcast, he an officer in the military service, proud and happy. Curses on him! Why can't his horse fall on him and crush him?"

Then his thoughts turned upon himself, and his present condition and situation. He was weary with travel—for, starting from Colchester at an early hour, he had made thirty miles that day with his long stride. Yet he thought it might suit his mood better to plod on in the night. He did not know whether it was to be dark or light, nor did he greatly care; he was questioning with himself whether he was tired enough to insure him a sound sleep at an inn.

"Because if I've got to be awake, and torment myself with thinking," he repeated, "I might as well be on the road as in a bed."

He looked toward the sea. It was quite near the road at this point, and a branch led down to it. There was light enough left so that he could see the roof of a house at the end of this by-road, cutting off much of the view of the water.

"Yes that's the Red Lion down there," he soliloquized. "Thought I knew the place. Well—is it stop, or go on?"

He did not at once answer his own question. Suddenly a grin overspread his face.

"Just as though it was of any consequence which!" he thought. "Well—may it not be? Who knows? Maybe fate has something laid up for me somewhere. Let chance settle it."

From a very small store of silver in his pocket he selected a coin and flipped it up.

"Heads I go—tails I stay!" he cried.

He bent over the coin where it had fallen. The effigy of King George was down. The wayfarer was to stay at the inn.

CHAPTER II.

AT THE RED LION.

Before the door of the inn by the sea at which our pedestrian had thus decided to pass the night the sign of a rampant lion swung, which the proprietor was careful to renew every year with fresh red paint. For those were brisk days of war on the continent and the seas; the armies of England were in Spain, and her navies were on the ocean, fighting the French, and the war spirit was wild through the land. The national emblem, therefore, hung out in front of an inn, was sure to attract custom; and none knew this better than Richard Ryder, the host of this tavern, who had long kept it.

It was a stoutly framed cottage building that had weathered the storms of a century, and is probably still affording entertainment for man and beast. There were accommodations for no more than half a dozen guests, for the main dependence of the place was its tap-room, where sailors and rustics were wont to gather at night, hear the Gazette from London read, talk over the war news, and drink the landlord's old ale. One room of the building requires special mention; it was the cosy little parlor in the south end, which was fitted up and furnished in much better style than other apartments of the house, for the use of officers of the great war-ships that frequently lay over night at the good anchorage grounds outside and the gentry of the neighborhood. Many a jovial evening was spent in this parlor, and the landlord was particular to keep in his cellar a store of choice old wine for this class of customers.

Next adjoining the parlor, with a door communicating, was the large tap-room, which was free to the public; then the dining-room and the few chambers. The house fronted toward the main highway, but the parlor could be entered at the rear by steps from the beach. Within the memory of men who often came to the Red Lion the sea at high tide was thirty yards from the rear of the inn; now the water had so encroached upon the land that the spray of the waves in rough weather dashed against the windows, and a row-boat from the bay had been known to come right up to these rear steps and disembark its load.

The daylight hours of that third day of September had been mild and pleasant, but at nightfall came a chilly wind from the sea, and the landlord had a fire built in the great chimney.

Dick Ryder, as he was familiarly called, was short and stout, usually good-natured, but with a reserve of spirit within him, for he had been a soldier in his early years, and had seen some service in the Low Countries. He bore the signs of good living upon his face and person, and the mere sight of him, it was said, was a first-class recommendation of his inn.

In the tap-room we now find the host and half a dozen idlers; the hostler, the stable-boy, and four farmers' lads come in to look and hear the news.

The light of the fire fell on the polished cans and brown mugs of the bar, the heavy, dark-colored frames of the windows, and the rather dull faces and coarse frocks of the laborers, and gave a picturesque effect to the interior of the tap.

Ryder leaned on the counter and was silent. This was not the kind of a crowd that brought grist to the mill, and he wasted no politeness on them.

"Oi see a big ship outside the night," ventured one of the rustics.

"O, aye!" said another. "What they calls un frigate, Oi say. Leastaways, Oi counted matter o' fifteen ports this way; so if so be there be as many——"

"Come, Barney, quit now," the landlord said, rather testily. "We're not all fools. She's a thirty-gun ship; that's easy to see. Haven't you seen a boat on the bay?"

There was a chorus of negatives.

"When the frigate came in and anchored, about the middle of the afternoon, I hoped some of the gentlemen would come off to spend the evening here. They may yet."

Heavy footfalls were heard on the steps outside, the door was thrown open, and a man whom nobody could mistake for aught but a sailor strode in. He had on a tarpaulin, or rough pilot coat, and the wide flowing trowsers of the tar; his face was red and tanned with the suns of many latitudes; his voice was deep and gruff, but by no means unpleasant.

There was nothing in his dress to indicate that he had any rank aboard ship; yet a close observer, a closer observer than any present, would have noticed something in his air and speech which could only come from habitual authority.

"Good evening, shipmates all," he said, looking about the room. "Landlord, ahoy there! I've had no good ale since we anchored at the Downs, a month ago. Give me a tankard; and you, ye lubbers!—step up here and drink the health of good King George, and confusion to the French."

This was an invitation that nobody was slow to accept. The sailor threw down a golden guinea, telling Mr. Ryder that he need not make the change just yet, as he might want more entertainment, and taking the large mug that had been filled for him he went across the room, took a large armchair, and tilted it comfortably back against the wall. The others drank what had been set out for them, and returned to their places about the apartment. The sailor threw open his coat, laid his great stiff hat on the floor, and prepared to take his ease. It was observed, but without any comment, that he did not act as though he was dry; he leisurely sipped his ale, and his eyes twinkled under his shaggy brows as they examined the room and the face of every person in it.

"You're from the frigate, I expect?" queried Ryder.

"Right, mate; the Hero, thirty-two, and as good a ship as flies the British colors."

"Won't any of the gentlemen be off to-night?"

"If you mean won't they visit you, I fancy not. I'm one of the boat's crew that brought the Captain ashore half a mile above here, just around that great cliff. He's got some kind of a lark to see to inland—none o' my business, you know—and the crew are waiting for him. He may come back in an hour, and he may not before midnight; and I says to the bos'n, 'Look here, bos'n, I'm told of a good place round the point there to get a glass of ale.' 'Humph!' says he. 'I'd like to go over,' says I. 'If you do,' says he, 'you'll take your own risk; and if the old man '(that's the Captain, you know)' don't find you here when he comes, why then——' 'I'll risk all that,' says I, knowing something of the old man's ways. And the bos'n not really forbidding me to come, I made sail; and here I am in this pleasant anchorage."

This characteristic description and account of himself being made, some of the rustics were emboldened to ask questions about the last cruise of his ship, and what he had lately seen of the enemy at sea. After submitting to this catechism for a few minutes, he became impatient, and abruptly said.

"See here, my lads, I could sit here for a week spinning sea-yarns to you, but I've no time for any more of it. Landlord, 'twas growing chill when I came in; we're going to have a cold, starry night. Will you have more company in here, think you?"

"No strangers, I think; the stages have passed both ways. Perhaps a few more of these country lads."

The outer door was swung open as he spoke, and the pedestrian whom we have seen on the road entered and threw his bundle on the counter.

CHAPTER III.

GUESTS AT THE INN.

"Ah, Rob Barnwell, how are you?" the landlord rather brusquely saluted the newcomer.

The man scowled and spoke in a low voice:

"Damnation! Dick Ryder, I wish you wouldn't blurt out my name in that fashion before a crowd. I don't like it."

"Maybe you're ashamed of it," sneered Ryder, without lowering his voice.

"No! Curse your mean spirit—you know I'm not! But the man who has been what I have been, and has come to be what I am now, don't like to have his name bawled out as if by the town-crier's mouth, so that every bumpkin sitting about may come up and stare at him But that's neither here nor there. I want lodging for the night. I've got a little money—enough to pay for it," and the speaker slapped his breeches-pocket, which returned a faint jingle of coin. "Will you keep me?"

"Y-e-s—I suppose so," was the hesitating reply.

"Very well. Get me something to eat; some bread and cheese and a mug of ale will do. Fetch the tray into the parlor, there; I want to be alone."

"No," returned the landlord, with energy, "I can't give you the parlor. The public dining-room on the other side is good enough for you; I'm likely to have gentlemen come in, who will want the parlor. Go into the dining-room and your lunch shall be sent in to you."

"Gentlemen, indeed!" Robert Barnwell leaned his elbows on the counter and put both hands under his chin. "Gentlemen? Why, you unmannerly Bardolph, d'ye mean to say that I'm not one? How many guineas do you suppose I've paid you for wine and entertainment in that very parlor? When did I cease to be a gentleman? Was it when I lost my fortune? Pretty treatment this is for an old customer! Are you not ashamed of yourself, Dick Ryder?"

As he proceeded his voice was raised to a high key. All present plainly heard him.

"For heaven's sake, Mr. Barnwell, don't make a scene here!" the landlord exclaimed; "you shall be well entertained; but the parlor——"

"Aye, the parlor! That or nothing! I call you all to witness," and the troublesome guest turned about to those sitting in the tap-room, whom he had not thus far noticed in the least, "that my legal rights in this inn are denied! I am Richard Barnwell, of Colchester, late a barrister-at-law, now an attorney's clerk. Fifty times have I enjoyed the seclusion of that parlor. I have money to pay for it now. I am clean and respectable, if I am poor and don't travel in a coach and four. But because I am poor and unfortunate, this man behind the counter don't want my patronage. I'll show him! I know the law, and——"

"There, there, Mr. Barnwell, say no more," cried the landlord. "I don't wish to deny you the parlor, if you insist. Go right in, if you will; the candles are lighted, and I'll put a fire in the chimney-place if you wish. Your lunch shall be brought right in to you."

Frowning and muttering, Barnwell picked up his bundle, entered the parlor, and slammed the door after him. The landlord tied on his white apron, and dispatched the hostler's boy to the kitchen with an order for refreshments.

The sailor had sat quietly through this stormy colloquy, taking silent note of the newcomer, but saying nothing. He had put his mug aside, not half drained.

"Troublesome customer?" he now observed, after the door slammed.

"Yes—dang his impudence!" replied Ryder, very red in the face. "I want no fuss nor trouble at the Red Lion, or I'd pitched him out, neck and heels. The reprobate—to talk that way to *me!*"

"Tell us something about him," said the sailor. "Who and what is he?"

Ryder was about to answer, when the boy came in with the lunch on a tray. The landlord took it from him and carried it into the parlor with his own hands. Returning after a few minutes, he dropped into a chair and gave vent to his vexation and irritation in a lengthy answer to the sailor's question.

"He's the most impudent varlet in all Essex. He don't know his place, and he won't learn it till somebody takes the trouble and the pains to teach it to him. I wish the fiend who is always at the elbow of such folk as he had sent him anywhere but here to-night. If one of your officers or some county gentleman should come in for two hours' entertainment to-night I couldn't get that surly fellow out of the parlor."

The rustics were eagerly listening. The sailor was also rather interested.

"Has seen better days, I should think, by his talk," he observed. "And he seemed to know you and to be used to the house."

"O, yes! I don't deny that there was a time when I was glad of Rob Barnwell's custom. And it's true, as he says, that he has spent much money here. But he's fallen pretty low in the last two years, and he's no right to remind me of what he used to be."

"Give us the story," said the sailor.

"I will, if I can make it short enough. I haven't the patience to waste words on him. As he told you, he used to be a barrister. He had a power of cases, too. I've heard him talk grandly to juries on the subject. I don't know as I've got the story right; but I understood that his aunt, who died in Colchester about two years ago, left him five thousand pounds. They say that turned his head. He quit his business, or neglected it, and was in London most of the time, drinking, carousing, and gaming. You might know how all that would end. He ran through everything he had; his money went, and his good name with it; and on account of the public scandal that he made, their lordships, the judges, threw him over the bar. All this summer, I hear, he's been working as clerk for a Colchester attorney. I suppose he's footing it to London, now, to get better employment."

"Bad wreck," the sailor observed, giving the utterance of his thoughts a professional term. "The ship on her beam ends; the timbers all rotten; everything blown loose; bound to break up and go to pieces on the sands."

"Yes," said Mr. Ryder. "And that's not the worst of it."

"The divil it ain't! How much worse might the worst be, shipmate?"

"He was courting a girl—handsomest girl in the county—while he was a brilliant and rising advocate. He threw all that away, with the rest. I hear now that she's engaged to Captain Ralph Courtenay, of the Ipswich garrison."

"Well, blast my eyes, if this ain't as good as a story-book, landlord! Who's the lady?"

"Miss Blanche Pembroke, younger daughter of Sir Roger Pembroke, baronet. They live about fifteen miles below here, on the broad Thames."

"What?—that white villa among the trees, facing the river, near Southend? I remember, the last time we were in that water, I learned who owned that pretty place."

The outer door was suddenly flung open again, and a man was seen on the steps with a bridle in his hand. The light from the fire and the candles shines full in his face, and we may recognize the officer who passed Barnwell upon the road.

"This way, landlord," he exclaimed. "Bring the hostler. My horse cast a shoe, and lamed himself before I knew it. I've been leading him back the last two miles. Bring your lantern."

The landlord quickly recognized him. "Your servant, Captain Courtenay," he said. "We'll help you all we can."

CHAPTER IV.

THE MEETING OF FOES.

The landlord hastily lit his lantern, and, calling to the hostler and the stable boy to follow, went outside. The curiosity of the loungers at this sudden appearance and demand required that they should see with their own eyes and hear with their own ears, and all of them followed. The tap-room was for a few minutes deserted by all but the seaman.

Nothing that had occurred had excited him. Being left alone, he rose, put on his hat, and, drawing forth a huge silver chronometer, examined its face.

"Almost nine," he soliloquized; "it won't do to wait much longer."

He took two or three turns about the room. Approaching the parlor door, he applied his ear to it. An occasional shuffling of a foot, or a cough, was all that he heard.

Stooping down, he applied his eye to the keyhole. He could see that the room was lighted, and the narrow range of vision afforded him showed him the tray resting on the center-table, a part of its contents, a hand and forearm moving up and down, as if in the act of conveying food from the tray to an invisible mouth—and some of the hangings of the wall beyond. More than this he could not see.

The door leading outside had been left ajar. A murmur of voices came into the room. The sailor crossed the floor, leaned against the oaken casing, looked and listened.

He saw through the aperture left by the unclosed door a few stars shining doubtfully in a cloudy sky. He saw the gleam of the lantern-light near the stables, which were at the north end of the inn. He continued to hear voices, and, while he could not catch all that was said, he heard enough snatches from the irritated speech of the Captain, the obstinate utterances of the hostler, and the deferential expressions of the landlord, to assure him what the trouble was, what was wanted, and what it was found necessary to do.

"A blooded Arabian, Mr. Ryder—the gift of my brother officers. I wouldn't have him crippled for——"

"Rest assured, Captain Courtenay, your horse could not be in better hands than those of my hostler, in all——"

"Hurt the gambrel joint. I can cure him; but he can't travel for a week, or——"

"Poor Mirabel! Well, I'll leave him to your care. Give me another horse, and I'll——"

"I am very sorry, Captain; I don't keep horses to let, and——"

"Heavens and earth—don't talk that way to me! Find one, or——"

"There's not a horse to be had within a league. I can't get you one to-night——"

"But I must go on! I'll walk, if——"

The sound of the voices seemed to drift away and was lost to the sailor's ear. He heard footsteps returning to the inn, and he resumed his chair and looked as indifferent as before.

The loungers came back, one after another, and dropped into their seats. The hostler and the boy remained at the stable.

"A bad sprain, that," said one.

"O, aye!—and Master Captain is in a bad temper over it. What's his hurry?"

"Why, doan' you hear what he said?"

"Dang it, no; only that he was in haste."

The first speaker significantly circled his head with his arm, as if with a noose. He was perfectly understood.

"What—a marryin'?"

"O, aye!—to-morrow night—down to the Pembroke Villa. And he was to be there to-night."

"Well, he won't—'less he walks."

"He could."

"But he won't, Shut thy jaw; here they come."

The landlord and his guest came in together.

"I am vexed beyond measure by this accident and its results," the latter said. "I've ridden him so carefully from Ipswich down; this is the second day I've been on the road; and to meet with such an accident, so near the Villa. Heaven send me patience! I'll take an hour to think what is best to do."

"You can easily get there in the morning stage by noon," suggested the landlord. "Or by the middle of the afternoon at the worst."

"Yes, I suppose so; and a pretty-looking bridegroom I should be, loitering along in that kind of way. Confound my luck!—at such a time, too! Well, I'll think of it. I'm hungry, now that I happen to think of that; I dined very early at Colchester, and feel particularly like doing justice to some of your good fare. I'll eat and smoke and think it over. Send up something good to me in the parlor, and send in the London *Gazette* of yesterday."

He strode toward the door.

"One moment, Captain," the host cried. "The parlor is not ready; sit down here a minute, and——"

It is doubtful whether Captain Courtenay heard him at all; if he did, he did not understand. His mind was filled with disappointment and irritation; his heart was at Pembroke Villa, and his thoughts were all bent upon the means to get there.

So he entered the parlor, closed the door, and found himself alone with the man who hated him beyond all men.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

"LOOK here, Pete," said a knowing darky to his companion, "don't stan' on the railroad." "Why, Joe?" "Kase if de cars see that mouth of yourn, dey will tink it am de station, an' run rite in."—*St. Louis Magazine.*

THE new apparatus for feeding the fires of the electric light plants does away entirely with the necessity of handling coal after it has been dumped in the fuel room.

TOBACCO LAW IN FRANCE.

The State Owns the Business There and Runs It Itself.

Visitors to France have noticed how careful the custom officers are to see that no one is smuggling in matches or tobacco. The importation of matches is prohibited and there is a very heavy duty on tobacco. Any one who has made the acquaintance of a French match will not readily forget it. Its peculiarity is that it is very reluctant to ignite, and is no sooner alight than it proceeds to extinguish itself. Matches have hitherto been made solely by one company, which had paid the Government a large sum every year for the privilege of supplying Frenchmen with bad matches. As a proposal to continue this system threatened to overthrow the Tirard Ministry the other day, the Government has decided to take the manufacture of bad matches into its own hands. The tobacco is made to suit the matches. It is also bad and dear. The tobacco business has long been a State monopoly, and is one of the principal sources of revenue. The latest report on the subject shows that last year's crop was 20,175,000 kilogrammes, which was valued at 16,423,000 francs, or $3,284,600. This was a poor year, giving only 995 francs worth per hectare, while in 1887 the value per hectare was 1,811 francs. This was the home production, but the Government imports a great deal of American tobacco in leaf, and manufactures it in France. The Government sells it after it is made, and the smallest tobacco store in France is part of this huge State monopoly.

The State gives the privilege of growing the weed to planters, and looks after them with motherly care. It fixes in what departments tobacco my be grown. It marks off the number of acres to be planted. It selects the variety of plant and settles what number may be grown on each acre. Not only so, but the army of officers, who are always prowling about on behalf of the State, count the plants in each acre and the number of leaves on each plant. Should a planter have less than the inventoried number of leaves when the harvest comes the officials will be down on him. A much graver offence, however, is to have too many leaves. This is regarded as an attempt to defraud the State, and unless satisfactorily explained is followed by fines and imprisonment. When he reaps his crop the planter has not the privilege of asking a price for it. The price is fixed by the State. Tobacco is grown in twenty-eight departments. There are 62,284 planters, and 16,507 hectares of plantations. There are twenty-seven stores for the reception of indigenous tobacco, and stores at Bordeaux, Dieppe, Dunkerque, Havre and Marseilles for imported tobacco. The State has twenty-one manufactories. The largest is that at Lille, which turns out six million kilogrammes of tobacco a year. There are 20,871 employes in the factories, of whom 2,560 are men and 18,311 women. This does not include officials and agents. The Government does not treat its employes very well, and strikes in tobacco factories are frequent.

All the tobacco stores in France belong to the State. There are over 40,000 of them. The State does not sell tobacco at retail except in three stores. All the others are let to widows of officers, Government officials, and sometimes to the widows of Senators, Deputies, and Prefects. They take the place of pensions. If the Government grants a pension to the wife of some man who has died in the service of the country, that generally means she gets a tobacco store, or bureau, as it is called. As the social position of the pensioners will not allow them to run the bureaus directly, they let them. The dealer is allowed 10 per cent. profit by the Government, and is prohibited from selling any tobacco except that supplied and priced by the State. Neither must they make cigarettes out of the Government tobacco. Every cigarette must bear the official stamp. The State has three bureaus in Paris where the best quality of cigars can be obtained. These are either imported or made out of imported tobacco.

It was Napoleon who established this monopoly in tobacco. The weed had been introduced into France by a Frenchman named Jean Nicot, and its manufacture was free in 1621. A monopoly was established in 1674, but was abolished long before the Revolution. Tobacco proved a profitable business when the culture was free. Napoleon was attracted at a ball in the Tuileries by a lady gorgeously arrayed with diamonds and jewels. "Who is that princess?" he inquired. When told that she was only a tobacco manufacturer's wife, he at once resolved to take charge of this means of acquiring wealth.

The Peanut (Arachis Hypogasa)—A Natural Curiosity.

How many of the readers ever examined the growth of the common peanut. There are not many grown in this State but enough to make a few familiar with the general appearance of the plant as it looks when growing.

Partly as a curiosity, we planted a few in the garden this season and watched them carefully from the time the yellow flowers appeared, to see them "force their ovaries in the earth and there ripen them." I had read what the books say about the habit of growth of the plant, and expected to see an elongated peduncle, with an incipient pod, turn over after the papilionaceous flower had fallen and penetrate the soil.

I was first surprised to see that the flowers, while distinctly of the class of the Leguminosæ, were quite sessile, or if they had any peduncle at all, it did not elongate, but the flowers dropped and left no sign visible to the naked eye of any fruit to follow. One, two weeks pass, more flowers bloom and fade, when lo! from the opposite side of the leaf, where a flower has been, there starts out a stout radicle that thrusts its end into the earth beneath, and after it has grown to a length of three inches or more, an incipient peanut is seen, which continues to develop with a thick, fleshy covering until it attains its full development.

I have never noticed a plant where there was less visible connection between flower and fruit, and I am inclined to think that this description, as given in the botany, is rather deficient. I would like to call the attention of some of your amateur botanists to the plant. Where it has grown the stems may yet be seen of this year's crop.—*American Farmer (Md.)*

An Export Brought to Grief.

How often you hear a man say that he can tell imported from domestic cigars by looking at them. I have been over ten years in the business, but I never felt equal to making such a boast as that. Some time ago my father was in Washington, and while there was one day talking to three other gentlemen. One of them, after making a declaration as outlined above, took three imported cigars from his pocket and passed them around for inspection, at the same time saying that no one ever fooled him as to whether a cigar was imported or not.

Meantime his cigars were laid on the table and my father, watching his opportunity, quietly took the cigars from the table unobserved, and substituted three of his own domestic cigars and laid them in the same place. The conversation soon reverted to the three cigars in question, and the boaster, turning to them, said: "Now, gentlemen, these cigars are imported, and I'll tell you why," and he then took them up and went on explaining the various points as to size, shape, color, taste, smell, etc.

As he concluded my father quietly said: "How much, Mr. Blank, would you be willing to bet that those were imported cigars?" "Ten dollars," said the expert. "I don't want your money, but I do want to convince you you are wrong," said Mr. P. "Those are not your imported cigars you have there; those are mine, and they are domestic. Here are yours," said the purloiner, as he pulled them out of his pocket. The expert's face turned pale and then red, and he was the picture of confusion. The others roared with laughter, and made the discomfited expert "set 'em up" all around. Moral—but it's too obvious to relate.—*Tobacco.*

Betting on a Sure Thing.

A young man with a baby in his arms stood on a street corner. The baby was at peace with itself, the young man who held it, and the world in general. The young man didn't appear so well satisfied. He looked quite anxious and ill at ease.

He had been standing there with the baby in his arms for almost an hour when two young men, who had been standing on the opposite corner enjoying the situation, crossed the street and walked up to him.

"I say, old chappie, where did you get the kid?"

"A young lady asked me to hold it for her a few moments while she went into a store," answered the young man, beginning to look as if he wished she hadn't.

"She did, eh? Well, the best thing you can do is to take the child up to police headquarters and report the case. That mother has deserted the baby."

"I don't believe it," said the holder of the baby, but the expression on his face seemed to belie the statement.

"You don't?" exclaimed the second young man. "I'll bet you $5 to $1 it's a fact."

"I'll take that bet," and the money was put up.

About five minutes later a very trim little lady came out of the store with her arms full of bundles.

"Oh, John, how long I've kept you waiting. Has baby been behaving itself? Come to the mother, poor little dear. What? You've got to see a friend? All right; hurry up."

And as the couple walked off the young gents on the corner could hear the fond father say:

"See, it will just buy baby that carriage you want so badly."

Lapp Wolf-Hunt.

The Swedish Lapps live entirely with, by, and upon their reindeer. A Lapp who owns a thousand deer is a very rich man; but as taxes are assessed upon the number of deer, he is inclined to underestimate his herd. The most dangerous enemy to the herd is the wolf, who, if disposed, can kill thirty deer in a night. A band of wolves can make a rich Lapp poor.

When the snow is deep and soft, and it is announced that wolf-tracks have been seen in the neighborhood of the deer, the swiftest runners on snow-shoes prepare for an exciting chase.

The wolf may have a start of a mile or two, but the track it leaves in the deep, soft snow is so prominent that the hunters can follow it at their best speed. The wolf, though he may run fast, has but a slight chance of escaping the short men, who, on snow-shoes, rush through the wood, dart down steep hills, and jump from ledges several yards in height.

Each hunter does his best to outrun the others, for the wolf belongs to the Lapp who strikes the first blow. As soon as the leading hunter is close enough to the wolf, he gives it a heavy blow across the loins with his strong, spiked snow-shoe staff. If there are other wolves to be pursued, he kills it outright; if not, he disables it, and waits till all the other hunters have arrived, before giving the death-stroke.

How Big an Orang-Outang Is.

The North Borneo orang-outang would seem to be a good deal bigger than the Sarawak one, of which Wallace says that of a good many shot by him the largest stood four feet two inches only. Hornaday's largest was four feet four inches. In North Borneo the smallest full-grown male I have measured was four feet four inches; four feet six inches seems to be a common size. A Mr. Adams shot one on the Suanlamba said to be four feet eight inches, and the one Mr. Dunlap shot near the club stood as much as four feet ten inches, the largest on record. Mr. Albert shot one on the Kinabatangan lately which measured from tip to tip of its fingers eighty-six inches across its outspread arms.—*North Borneo Herald.*

"PLEASE to give me something, sir," said an old woman. "I had a blind child; he was my only means of subsistence, and the poor boy has recovered his sight."